**Themes**

Themes are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work.

***Naming Names***

During the McCarthy Era in the United States, people were asked questions by the House Un-American Activities Committee. They were asked to name the names of people who liked the communists and who were communists.

Arthur Miller was called to speak to the committee in 1956. He would not name anyone so other actors, writers, etc. thought of him as a strong person who was loyal.

Miller was thought to be a hero because he said nothing. But Eddie, who does name names, is thought to be a coward and a bad person.

During the McCarthy Era, some people who were asked to speak to the committee named innocent people as guilty to protect themselves. Miller uses this play to show how wrong the McCarthy trials were and how bad people were to name innocent people.

***The irrational human animal***

Eddie loses control of his actions in the play. He loves his niece and his actions are not right but he is always trying to make sure that the community still respects him and he keeps his good name. Eddie is acting on his instincts and is not thinking about what he is doing and saying. Alfieri tries to get Eddie to understand that he can’t act on his instincts alone and must ignore some of his needs.

***Allegiance to community law***

There is a conflict between community and American law in the play.

\*The community protects illegal immigrants within their homes, values respect and family.

-People in the community are hard working and know the shipping culture.

-They believe in trust and want revenge when someone has been wronged.

But this conflicts with American law. Eddie Carbone chooses to turn against his community and follow the state laws. He loses the respect of his community and friends—the name and personal identity he loves.

Eddie Carbone goes back to another custom of Sicilian-Americans: revenge. The final victor of the play is symbolic of community values—the Italian, Marco. So, the small community is stronger than American law.